Decontrol of coal price in the country

296. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA :
SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL :
SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have mooted a proposal to decontrol the price of coal including the superior grade coal ;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof ;

(c) what are the details of the recommendations made by Bureau of Industrial Cost and Price about the Pricing policy of coal to be followed in the country in future ;

(d) whether the Coal India Limited is enjoying monopoly status of production and sale of coal in the country ; and

(e) if so, how far it is advisable to decontrol the price and leave the consumer at the mercy of Coal India Limited without any alternative source of supply of coal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (e) Prices of coal are fixed by Govt. under clause 4 of Colliery Control Order, 1945 continued in force under Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Bureau of Industrial Costs & Prices (BICP) had first undertaken a study of coal industry in 1985 mainly with a view to rationalise its cost structure and to recommend coal prices which are fair and reasonable both to industry and to the consumers. Based on their report the coal prices are being revised from time to time.

BICP has again taken up the study of coal industry since 1991. Their final report has not been received. However, BICP have made some interim recommendations relating to grading for pricing of coal, decontrol of prices for some grades of coal, efficiency price for fully linked mines etc. Coal India Ltd., although the largest producer and supplier of coal, does not enjoy a monopoly status. Coal is also being produced by Singareni Collieries Company Ltd., some steel companies, State Mineral Development Corporations etc. Besides Govt. has already taken a decision to allow private companies engaged in power generation to own captive coal mines. Coal is also being allowed to be imported without any restrictions.

297. [*Transferred to 14th December, 1993*]

Representations Received for Payment of Cash Compensatory Support

298. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of representations received in the past three months for payment of Cash Compensatory Support to those exporters who concluded exports before the 2nd July, 1991 ;

(b) whether it is a fact that Directorate General of Foreign Trade have not issued appropriate clarifications as required by the exporters for getting the payment ; and

(c) if so, the facts and reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) Some representations have been received from exporters who had under taken exports upto 2nd July, 1991 for expeditious payment of CCS. Govt have issued clear instructions that CCS is to be paid by the Regional Licensing offices to all entitled categories of exporters.

Quantum Jump in Export of Agricultural Products

299. SHRI G. G. SWELL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a quantum jump in export of our agricultural products ;

(b) if so, the amount of increase in terms of dollar in the last one year;

(c) the names of products that were exported; and

(d) whether Government have been able to meet the phytosanitary standards of developed countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMERS AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c) Export of agricultural commodities (excluding cotton) during 1991-92 was US $ 1882 million, and that during 1992-93 has been provisionally estimated at US $ 1950 million. For 1993-94, a target of US $ 2255 million has been fixed. The major items being exported are deoiled cakes, cashew, tobacco, spices, rice, fruits and vegetables, processed foods, sugar, etc.

(d) Government has repeatedly been emphasising to the exporting community, the need for exporting goods of internationally accepted quality and Indian agricultural commodities are very well accepted internationally.

Variation in the Price of Indian and Indonesian Coal Available in Bangladesh.

300. SHRI G. G. SWELL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Meghalaya Coal at Bangladesh within its border is available at $ 40 per ton whereas the Indonesian coal is available at $ 48 a ton;

(b) whether it is a fact that the calorific value of Meghalaya coal is superior to that of Indonesia's;

(c) whether it is also a fact that 39 cu ft for a ton is the volume measurement in Meghalaya whereas it is only 35 cu ft to a ton in Bangladesh thus giving the Bangladesh traders the advantage of 4 cu ft, for a ton; and

(d) if so, whether what steps Government propose to take so that this trade is not too much in disfavour of the Meghalaya exporters?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) There are no restrictions on export of Meghalaya Coal w.e.f. 1-4-1993. No reliable information is available regarding the prices at which imported coal from various sources is available in Bangladesh. Since coal produced in Meghalaya mines has not been graded, details regarding calorific value and density of coal produced in Meghalaya are not avalable.

Dunkel Draft on Textiles

301. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the write-up in the Times of India of 1st September, 1993 regarding India's submitting 5-point amendment to the Dunkel Draft on Textiles; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In the negotations that took place in November—December, 1992 India had made proposals on the textiles agreement of the Dunkel draft. In view of the importance that India attaches to this matter these proposals were also brought to the attention of the Director General of GATT recently.

2. The proposals for amendments in the Agreement on Textiles are as below:

(i) Annex may be split into two parts—Part A and Part B Part A would comprise of those products which are MFA items as defined in Article 12 of the MFA. Part B would comprise of non-MFA products.

(ii) Products in Part A only would be relevant for in Integration